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### Museum exhibits artworks from UM permanent collection

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## **NEWS RELEASE**

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Nov. 9, 2009

**Contact:** Brandon Reintjes, curator of art, Montana Museum of Art & Culture, 406-243-2019, [brandon.reintjes@mso.umt.edu](mailto:brandon.reintjes@mso.umt.edu).

### **MUSEUM EXHIBITS ARTWORKS FROM UM PERMANENT COLLECTION**

#### **MISSOULA –**

Two exhibitions featuring works from the Permanent Collection of the Montana Museum of Art & Culture will open Friday, Nov. 13, in the museum's Meloy and Paxson galleries, located in the Performing Arts and Radio/Television Center at The University of Montana.

The exhibitions contain works created between World War I and World War II and provide strong parallels to our country's current economic condition and resulting policies.

"Josephine Hale: Paintings and Sketches by a Montana Pioneer Artist" will be on view in the Meloy Gallery.

"By the People, For the People: New Deal Prints from the 1930s and 1940s" will be in the Paxson Gallery.

The exhibitions will be at the museum through Saturday, Dec. 19.

Josephine Hale (1878-1961) was one of Montana's most extraordinary early 20th-century painters, dividing her time between Great Falls and Paris in the 1920s and 1930s. Her life and art were shaped by two factors: a strong commitment to volunteerism and her love of travel.

Hale became an early volunteer with the American Red Cross during World War I, receiving an award from the French government for her public service. She studied art at the Academy Delecluse in Paris, exhibiting in the prestigious Salon of 1934.



Hale's art reflects the best early 20th-century academic arts training available, translated into idyllic scenes of Glacier National Park and the Missouri River. Her paintings are a confluence of several influences and stylistic factors, including the rich tradition of plein air painting and French Académie training. She brought chic, sophisticated European culture to the sparsely populated regions of the plains east of the Continental Divide.

"By the People, For the People" includes 31 works created as part of New Deal economic recovery programs during 1933-43 that were designed to pull the United States out of the Great Depression. During this period, the U.S. government and individual artists worked together to create jobs by the thousands to bring public art to federal buildings, courthouses, post offices and other community settings.

For artists, the programs not only provided solid employment, but also served to elevate them to professional status while making art accessible to the common person. New Deal art projects generated energy and excitement when the country was in despair and represent the largest public art program of their kind in American history.

Containing two distinct bodies of work – pastoral or whimsical selections and depictions that elevate the status of labor, agriculture, production and industry taking place across the country – the exhibition shows the arts as a means of bolstering morale, combating poverty and developing a uniquely American culture.

In 1934 the federal government began loaning or allocating portable artworks created under the programs, which is how the works came to MMAC's Permanent Collection. They are on permanent loan courtesy of the Fine Arts Program of the General Services Administration in Washington, D.C.

"By the People, For the People" offers viewers a parallel perspective between the New Deal era and the country's current economic crisis, which led to the American Recovery and Reinvestment



Act of 2009 – the first time an economic recovery plan has been enacted on this scale since the 1940s.

Two public events will take place in conjunction with the exhibitions:

- 5-7 p.m. Friday, Nov. 13: Opening reception at MMAC galleries.
- 7 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 18, at the Masquer Theatre in the PAR/TV Center: Lecture titled “In Country, Out of Country: The Life and Art of Josephine Hale.” Presented by Brandon Reintjes, MMAC curator of art.

Gallery hours are 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday and 4 to 8:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday. A \$5 donation is suggested, and free parking is available near the northeast corner of the PAR/TV Center.

For more information, call 406-243-2019 or go to the museum’s Web site at

<http://www.umt.edu/montanamuseum>.

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**NOTE TO MEDIA:** Digital images of selected artworks included in the exhibitions are available by request. Call Becky Garner, MMAC publications and programs coordinator, at 406-243-2019 or e-mail [rebecca.garner@mso.umt.edu](mailto:rebecca.garner@mso.umt.edu).

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Local, dailies

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